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Poland

AGRICULTURAL BIOTECHNOLOGY ANNUAL

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Report Highlights:

Poland's parliament is reviewing proposed legislation that would restrict cultivation of bioengineered crops. New legislation is expected to be completed by early 2013. On June 1, 2011, the Parliament passed but the President vetoed a revised National Seed Law containing language prohibiting distribution of GMO seeds (officially banned for commercial trade since 2006). The President's reason being that a comprehensive law on biotechnology was needed, not piecemeal legislation via the seed and other related laws. Poland's 2006 law restricting commercial trade of bioengineered seeds also banned import of feed containing bioengineered events, a provision that was suspended until January 1, 2013.

Section I. Executive Summary:

Country-specific approach to biotechnology and legislation

Poland's parliament is considering a restrictive new law on cultivating agricultural biotechnology. The new law envisages restrictive coexistence measures, as well as many stringent administrative measures and penalties for farmers intending to plant GMO crops. The new GMO legislation is expected to be completed by early 2013.

On June 1, 2011, the Polish Parliament passed a new National Seeds Law with restrictive language prohibiting distribution of GMO seeds (officially banned for commercial trade since 2006).

The Polish President vetoed the new seeds law passed by the Parliament; in part on grounds the proposed legislation would prohibit registration of bioengineered seed in the national registry, a requisite for commercial cultivation in Poland.

Poland still has on record a ban on imports of feed with GM content; scheduled to be implemented on January 1, 2013.

Plant Biotechnology Policy

Poland's Parliament (the Sejm) has started to debate a new, very restrictive legislative proposal pertaining to agricultural biotechnology. The proposal envisages obligatory measures which would burden farmers interested in planting bioengineered crops thus discourage their planting on a commercial scale. The Ministry of Agriculture has draft coexistence implementing regulations that call for isolation zones between bioengineered and conventional and organic crops of 500 and 1,000 meters, respectively.

Trade and Production

Commercial planting of biotechnology crops for consumption or for production of planting seeds.

Unofficial estimates place area planted to bioengineered corn at 3,900 HA.

Biotechnology crops under development that will be on the market in the coming year.

Presently no bioengineered plants are under development in Poland.

Confined research conducted in Poland.

Plant biotechnology research is conducted by several research institutes. These programs consist of basic research, plant breeding (in few cases in cooperation with foreign companies or laboratories), or experiments on effects of biotechnology plant varieties on the environment.

Poland's import of biotechnology crops/products or planting seeds

At the moment Poland continues to import feeds enhanced through biotechnology. On January 1, 2013, an import ban on such feed is scheduled to go into force. This ban originally was to go into effect in 2011 but was delayed due to strong opposition from Poland's livestock industry. Current Polish legislation prohibits trade but

not planting of bioengineered seeds.

National Coexistence Rules

Poland is proposing restrictive coexistence measures of as much as 500 to 1,000 meters.

New legislation is expected to be completed by early 2013.

Plant Biotechnology Marketing Issues

Polls conducted in Poland in 2011 show that over 60 percent of respondents were against buying/eating GMO food. Usage of feeds containing bioengineered content is not being questioned, mostly due to lack of awareness.

Anti-GMO organizations active in Poland include: Stop GMO, Friends of the Polish Countryside, The Greens/European Free Alliance in the European Parliament, Friends of the Earth, Association of Ecological Farmers.

Other Relevant Information

For further information about the situation and regulatory framework for biotechnology in the EU please see a website dedicated to biotechnologies by the [Foreign Agricultural Service U.S. Mission to the European Union](#) based in Brussels.